

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 DRC-01 /133 W

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R 111530Z JUL 74

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2759

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT AO

SUBJECT: MILITARY SITUATION - FNLA

1. ARMED FORCES ANNOUNCED JULY 10 THAT PORTUGUESE INTERVENTION FORCES ON JULY 3 INTERCEPTED "NUMEROUS" FNLA GUERRILLAS INFILTRATING THROUGH ZAIRE DISTRICT EN ROUTE TO SANCTUARY IN DEMBOS. TWELVE GUERRILLAS KILLED; 3 CAPTURED. LATTER CANNOT SPEAK PORTUGUESE, ONLY FRENCH, I.E., NOT GENUINE ANGOLANS. PORTUGUESE LOSSES 1 KIA AND 4 WOUNDED.

2. IN COURSE OF BRIEFING FOR VISITING DEPTOFF COOK (INR) MILITARY SPOKESMAN SAID THIS BELIEVED TO BE START OF LONG-HERALDED FNLA "OFFENSIVE." PORTUGUESE PARATROOPS NUMBERING ONLY 20 INITIALLY SET DOWN AMONG MORE THAN 150 GUERRILLAS, ONE OF FIVE BANDS TOTALLING AROUND 500, PORTUGUESE BELIEVE. PORTUGUESE ACTED ON BASIS INTELLIGENCE; ALTHOUGH OUTNUMBERED HAD ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE. (INTELLIGENCE BLACKOUT FOLLOWED APRIL 25 COUP FOR ABOUT A MONTH. LINES NOW RE-ESTABLISHED.)

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3. ACCORDING TO HIGH COMMAND BRIEFER, FNLA INVASION FORCE HAS

ABOUT - FACED AND IS NOW RETREATING BACK TO ZAIRE REPUBLIC. PORTUGUESE CONSIDER IT SIGNIFICANT THAT THESE TROOPS, IF CAPTURED 3 ARE TO BE BELIEVED, INCLUDE MAJORITY WHO SPEAK NO PORTUGUESE, BEING SONS OR GRANDSONS OF EX-ANGOLANS, AND IN SOME CASES NOT "ANGOLAN" AT ALL. NO REGULAR ZAIRIAN ARMY TROOPS INVOLVED, TO DATE.

4. HE SAID PORTUGUESE VERY CONSCIOUS OF LONG TERM THREAT POSED BY ROBERTO'S FORCES WHICH NUMBER AN ESTIMATED 5,000 INSIDE ANGOLA, PLUS EQUAL NUMBER IN CAMPS IN ZAIRE. PORTUGUESE DISPARAGE THEIR MILITARY COMPETENCE, IN CONTRAST TO "WELL-TRAINED" MPLA TROOPS (800) UNDER NETO'S COMMAND IN DOLISIE. TROOPS INSIDE ANGOLA, HOWEVER, (AND CONTRARY TO INDICATIONS OF REVIVED SPIRITS AND RENEWED AGGRESSIVENESS IN RECENT ENCOUNTERS AROUND CARMONA) ARE SAID TO BE SHOWING DISTINCT SIGNS OF QUITTING: PORTUGUESE ARMY IS CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING WITH ONE GROUP NEAR CARMONA FOR SEPARATE CEASE FIRE.

5. BRIEFER ALSO CONFIRMED REPORT RECENTLY REACHING US FROM MISSIONARY IN CAZOMBO SALIENT THAT FNLA UNIT OPERATING FROM ZAIRE EAST OF TEIXEIRA DE SOUSA (DILOLO) HAD MAKE "TOKEN ATTACK" ON BENGUELA RAILWAY, IN WHICH ENGINEER AND ONE OTHER CREWMAN INJURED. ATTACK PRESUMED TO HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO REMIND PORTUGUESE, MPLA, UNITA AND NATIVES OF AREA THAT FNLA RETAINS CAPABILITY TO ASSERT ITSELF IN EAST. (COMMENT: INCIDENT HAS NOT BEEN REPORTED BY MEDIA.) BRIGGS

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